EMPTY SET

Contradiction as a form of organization

$$\varnothing = \{x \in A \mid x \neq x\}$$

Document

2026

1. What is to be done?

The question that opens this discussion is 'what is to be done?', but here the action is framed within the search for a joint action. Even so, before understanding joint action, we must go back to what action is necessary at an individual level.

At this moment, as we delve into 'what is to be done?' as particular subjects, we are questioning how to guide our individual activity as an organ of the social life process, insofar as the simplest determination of consciousness is to be a purely individual form of the social life process. And this, and nothing else, is what we mean when we say that social being determines consciousness. Consciousness is the way in which social being is realized. As subjects, we must appropriate the environment, and this describes us as living subjects. When we look at our life process, our biography, this is the movement we are making. It is a succession of moments in which we face the environment and must organize an action to continue reproducing our subjectivity in an optimal way. The action carried out may leave us in a better or worse position, but it has taken the form of conscious action, it has assumed the form of will.

As subjects who act in a given society, in a society governed by capital, we must also understand our action in a determined way. The level of concreteness of the reality we face compels us to carry out an equally concrete action. And for this reason, the need for this knowledge to be scientific becomes increasingly urgent. Our action is required to be guided by a consciousness that is not deceived by appearances. For this very reason, it compels us to know the social environment in which we develop our individual life.

As we progress in the process of understanding the social environment, we analytically reach the simplest determination of our society: the commodity. The question of " what is to be done?" already contains within itself the starting point of the critique of political economy, which, as we can anticipate, presents itself to us as the most powerful development of a knowledge that does not stop at appearances. To be critical, to carry out critique, is the concrete and necessary way to guide properly communist action. The CoPE is then determined as the conscious organization of the practical abolition of capital. And the object of study, if it can be called that, of this science is the capitalist mode of production, and its reason for being is none other than the necessity of advancing in the conscious organization of transformative action.

Being critical therefore involves a specific stance regarding knowledge and reality. The critic is compelled to oppose any form of interpretation of reality, highlighting the need for the dialectical reproduction of the concrete through the path of thought. This gives rise to an attitude that requires doubting doubt, finding the root of doubt, and thereby making doubt radical doubt. For this reason, any process of personal knowledge implies a recognition of the work carried out by other subjects in their original process of knowledge. To be radical is to take things by the root, and for human beings, the root is the human being itself.

The root of the human being is found, as we have been saying, in their vital activity. From its simplest determination, the process of human life, as we saw, is a process of social metabolism based on labor. It is the development of human capacity to appropriate the environment that gives content to the development of the productive forces of labor. And it is precisely this development that defines the human being as a subject who produces their own history. This positions the human being as the supreme essence for themselves. And insofar as they confront in their daily life the product of their objectified labor, insofar as the human being objectifies themselves in nature and in their products, they see themselves reflected in the world they have created. The importance of this for the overcoming of representational knowledge is crucial, since it shows the unity formed by subject and object in human life.

In the very development of this form of knowledge, which had discovered in the commodity the simplest determination of the capitalist social relationship, the individual discovers that their free consciousness and will are the concrete form of their consciousness alienated in the commodity. The producer is free because they are not controlled by any personal dependency relationship, having control over the allocation of individual labor. But despite that freedom, they lack control over the social character of their labor. The social powers of their labor confront them as something external to themselves; they appear to them in an alienated form in the commodity. As long as, in order to reproduce their life, the individual must subject their consciousness and will to the need to produce value, they are acting as the personification of their commodity.

Thus, at an individual level, we must continue in the production of a consciousness that transcends immediate appearance, striving to understand our own alienated determination. We can only advance in our freedom by recognizing ourselves as subjects alienated by capital. It is the recognition of alienation that allows alienation to relate to itself in such a way that free consciousness negates its negation. This is freedom as consciousness of necessity, which is not yet the elimination of alienation, but allows the subject to recognize their determinations and act accordingly, that is, to act with knowledge of the cause.

The only way to know the necessity, the determination, of our action is through dialectical knowledge, since there is no way to discover in our freedom the alienation if we start from the prevailing premise in the current scientific method where A=A, that is, there is no way for something to contain its opposite (thereby eliminating any possibility of real self-movement)

Dialectical consciousness is the necessary way in which capital generates the conditions for its overcoming, insofar as it lays the foundations for the recognition of alienation; individual action takes the form of producing this consciousness. That is, individually necessary action is the conscious activity of advancing in the dialectical understanding of one's own social determinations, moving from the knowledge of alienation to the knowledge that organizes the overcoming of the capitalist mode of production.

Once the need and power of individual knowledge are recognized, we can move forward toward the need for collective organization. Consciousness, as we have pointed out, consumes the products of social labor. Joint organization transforms individual intellectual work into a process of recognition from a social standpoint. It is a delivery of objectified knowledge, endowing it with the power to be socially reproduced. Individual recognition of the need, of going beyond appearances, may be insufficient, as the only way to verify whether your knowledge process has been correct is by confronting your process of knowledge with the recognition process of another person. For that confrontation to gain greater potency, it must be conscious, that is, it requires that both knowledge processes be organized together. Otherwise, the need for these knowledge processes to confront each other would be subject to such particularities that it could be considered random.

Thus, joint organization becomes necessary because the logic of dialectical research excludes any appearance of externality with respect to the action it governs, compels joint reproduction, and therefore a process of constant recognition that allows for progress in criticism. This, as we have said, requires that the subject confront doubt as a radical, critical doubt. If the subject decides to advance in their process of knowledge without subjecting it to the critique of the collective, their process degenerates into a representation and mutilates the transformative potentials of the knowledge produced. Disorganization affects the chain of collective action as a whole.

2. Why Empty Set *?

* See Appendix A.

Let's pause for a moment on this organizational issue. The fact that an individual decides to advance in their process of knowledge without subjecting it to the critique of the collective implies that they see themselves as a mere individual rather than as an organ of the collective. This perspective, which is based on not recognizing the need for collective organization, falls into a form of representation. This degeneration, if it affects the entire collective, necessitates that the organization take a democratic form. A democratic organization is the preferred organizational form of the free individual, properly capitalist. The democratic decision-making process is based on formal mechanisms that address conflict through a distinction between majority and minority. Thus, decision-making is based on the will of the majority, which implies that the course of action is established by consensus. At all times, it is necessary to ensure universal and full freedom of criticism. However, the minority must always submit to the decision of the majority.

The mandatory submission given in the democratic process implies that the organization is always determined to act based on the will expressed as consensus. If the organization acts based on the will of the majority rather than recognizing the need for action, the power of its transformative action is diminished. This diminishment takes shape in the persistence of an abstractly free consciousness and, consequently, logical representation within the organization. The fragmentation of the organization into minority and majority, inherent to the democratic form, leads to the majority imposing its will, and if the minority does not submit, repression arises (expulsions, marginalization, etc.) of the deviation.

The absence of a formal organization, of a centralized management guided by collective necessity, does not eliminate power. This absence alienates it into the appearances of abstract horizontality. In these spaces, leadership does not arise from a deep understanding of causes, from the consciousness that transcends immediacy through critique by the non-aprioristic dialectical method. This leadership arises from elective affinities and affective bonds that appear to be spontaneous. And as constituted bonds, in reality, they do so in the concrete form in which the appearances of alienation are reproduced within the collective. As a determination, it generates a tyranny of lack of structure, where the decision-making process is subjected to the abstract will that ends up mutilating the transformative power of organized knowledge, and concretely, the powers of individual political action. To

understand this tyranny, we must analytically break it down into its simplest determinations. We must reproduce its internal movement by recognizing the contradiction inherent in capital that manifests itself in the appearance of individual freedom.

The simplest determination occurs when decisions are made in closed circles. Lacking management mechanisms that recognize the need for the joint reproduction of knowledge, real power shifts to those who share the oldest or closest friendships. The very way it is expressed is nothing more than the personification of the fragmentation inherent in capital, where external forces take precedence over the organic unity of the collective. The individual who is not part of this core faces an alien consciousness that presents itself as their own, and this very confrontation prevents the recognition of their determination as an organ of the social process, reproducing the apparent processes of alienation in which the individual objectifies themselves as a commodity, subjected to external relations.

The process of accumulation is global in its content (it unifies the valorization, reproduction, and social metabolism of labor on a global scale), but it necessarily takes on a national form, derived from the private nature of social labor, which is fragmented into differentiated accumulation processes. Individuals therefore reproduce themselves under specific conditions determined by this national form, and any political praxis that does not wish to dissolve the form into abstract content must start from the concrete ways in which these productive subjectivities are constituted. It is not possible to immediately personify oneself as a global unit; thus, political action unfolds from the national form that materially structures social reproduction and subjectivity.

This formal determination, in turn, produces a specific tyranny, that is, where there exists a covert exclusion that is not based on the individual's critical or investigative capacity, but on their effective non-belonging to a national form of citizenship inherent to the accumulation process. Such exclusion reproduces the appearances of alienation, forcing the subject to confront barriers that do not arise from the internal necessity of critique, but from the appearance of immediate affinity. The universal power of the subject is thus mutilated, and their action subordinated to external needs that express the contradiction between the proclaimed abstract freedom and the concrete necessity imposed by the process of social production.

In this context, an internationalist relationship of communication and coordination between collectives registered in different national forms is entirely feasible, as long as it acknowledges the real mediation of those forms. However, the creation of a single operational group that seeks to unify action and subjectivity beyond those mediations

tends to generate unresolved tensions, since there are difficulties in articulating a common praxis and in recognizing the effective entirety of the subjectivities involved, precisely because their conditions of reproduction are not homogeneous.

The contradiction presented reaches its point of tension in collective irresponsibility. Without coordination, the necessary tasks within the collective space for scientific progress dissolve into the appearance of individual freedom. This omission condemns research to stagnation, to a paralysis that prevents transcending and organizing the practical critique of capital. Irresponsibility is not voluntary in origin but is the concrete form in which the lack of structure reproduces the representative logic, where action is governed by abstract will rather than by knowledge of necessity, denying the self-movement of the social process.

Once the tyranny of the lack of structure in its analytical moments is broken down, we can move toward its incompatibility with the development of the collective worker. The advancement of science, as a concrete form of the critique of political economy, requires a division of labor where individual qualities carry the universality of knowledge. These qualities are recognized as organs of the collective worker who produces history through the social metabolism founded on labor. Now, the division that emerges is not arbitrary, as it is the reproduction of the unity between subject and object, where each individual objectifies themselves in the collective process, transcending the alienation inherent to the capitalist mode of production. A group based on friendship is incapable of managing the complexity of this collective worker. This group prioritizes personal harmony, the appearance of immediate affinity, over the demand of scientific rigor, over the necessity of radical doubt that confronts the subject with their own alienation. Friendship acts as an anesthetic that prevents criticism, since any critique they undertake presents itself to them as an attack on that personal affinity, thus nullifying the possibility of a genuine synthesis. This nullification is not a mere mistake but an expression of the reproduction of fetishized (and not merely alienated) consciousness in capital, where the exteriority of personal relationships imposes itself over the interiority of one's own necessity, limiting the collective's capacity to recognize its historical determination.

From our perspective, the process of knowledge cannot be based on persuasion. The act of convincing is inherent to logical representation. To convince is to try to get another person to uncritically accept a starting point by demonstrating the formal, tautological consistency of the argument. Convincing becomes useless. Social work in the production of consciousness must consist of confronting the individual with critical doubt regarding any appearance. If a person is convinced by external reasons and does not internally reproduce the necessity, their process of knowledge is

doomed to representation. Thus, the debate that precedes the vote within the democratic decision-making process is the struggle to convince enough members to reach a majority and ensure consensus. If the minority's critique fails to convince the majority, the minority submits its action to the line dictated by a consciousness that appears alien to it (the minority's consciousness is alienated within the majority). This submission ensures that even if the minority has discovered the objective necessity through the dialectical method, collective action is still governed in a voluntarist way. By forcing the minority to yield to formal consensus, the organization cannot move toward transformative action guided by a consciousness that transcends exteriority. This forces the minority to remain submissive or to split into a faction.

A form of organization that can be recognized as alienated, guiding its action through dialectical knowledge, then becomes necessary. This action must be governed by fully developed consciences, which have already independently reproduced the objective determinations of capital and of their own subjectivity, recognizing their own alienation. Thus, decisions made organically arise from the methodological unity of the collective's members. Criticism never occurs in terms of a conflict of interests, but as a demand that knowledge aligns with objective necessity. This makes the goal not to convince the individual of an external reason, but for them to subject the product of social labor to critique, recognizing by themselves the necessity of action. In this case, the internal division of labor within the collective is guided by the need that each member recognizes, thereby assigning each individual to the function in which they feel most capable. This ultimately defines this form of organization as one in which factionalism is eliminated, ensuring that there is no minority obstructing the unity of action.

In summary, resolving the question of "what is to be done?" requires us to transcend the immediacy of individual consciousness through dialectical critique in order to act with informed purpose. However, this intellectual effort cannot be sustained in isolation. It requires collective verification to prevent knowledge from degenerating into mere representation. This has forced us to reject democratic organizational forms that undermine the recognition of one's own determinations. The real alternative lies in a methodological unity where action is recognized as an expression of a need. Given the necessity of group organization, let us examine the concrete need that leads us to organize Conjunto Vacío.

Conjunto Vacío has been guided from the beginning by recognizing its determination as an infinitesimal fragment of the working-class set. Precisely the acknowledgment of this determination already defines us as the individuals who make up the set as organs

whose unity corresponds through disparate biographical trajectories and that we could only unify through the shared experience of a limit existing in other organizations that try to develop communist action. The subjects who make up Conjunto Vacío recognize that our consciousness is alienated in capital and, as such, our action is determined as an expression of capital.

If consciousness is the way in which each subject carries within themselves the capacity to govern their individual activity as an organ of the social life process, and in the capitalist mode of production social relations appear as something external to individuals, then our consciousness, the individual consciousness of commodity producers, is the concrete form in which their alienated consciousness is realized in capital. If consciousness is determined by capital, the organization that seeks the necessity of its action in democratic consensus falls, as we said, into an error that mutilates the transformative powers of collectively organized knowledge.

The members of Conjunto Vacío recognize ourselves as subjects perfectly determined by properly capitalist social relations, our consciousness being a concrete form of the realization of capital. At the same time, we are subjects seeking our own negation, which implies the overcoming of capital. The organicity that our method obliges us to entails renouncing authorship of our theoretical production, since the process of producing it has developed in full relation with the rest of the organization, being a process of 'own' knowledge only in singular moments, this being reflected in strictly formal matters, as strictly individual issues have been refined through the social recognition of the development carried out. It then takes an immediately social form both in its form and in its content.

This very thing makes us give up authorship of our work as an individual form of property and recognition. The product of our work belongs, first and foremost, to Conjunto Vacío and, more broadly, to the rest of the working class. The organization does not close in on a list of authors or a fixed identity group. The identity of Conjunto Vacío is a process of constant self-criticism, since, through its organizational structure and method, every process of knowledge is always a process of recognition. The simultaneous inclusion and exclusion, which gives the collective its name, is manifested in the fact that only those who embody the need to confront any appearance or argument with the weapon of doubt, recognizing along the same path the negation of the negation of free consciousness as its determination, can be part of Conjunto Vacío. The negation of simple individual identity is the condition for affirming the objectivity of knowledge that seeks to overcome capital. Thus, this individuality, our individual action, is the way the collective is realized.

3. The Organization's Tasks

We are not here to present in any way any type of political or economic program, since we do not intend to talk here either about the immediate tasks or the historical mission of the working class. And with this distinction, we are also not referring to the division between minimum and maximum programs. What it is about, in any case, is to outline the general tasks that Conjunto Vacío carries out and its necessity.

The first task is to exercise radical doubt toward all appearances. Critique cannot stop at the surface. Therefore, the main target of radical critique is the appearance that prevents the subject from recognizing the real determinations of their existence. The objective is to show that individual consciousness is the concrete form in which alienated consciousness is realized in capital. If the subject guides their actions without recognizing this, and instead recognizes themselves as abstractly free, they are unable to recognize themselves as the historical subject of the abolition of capital. To achieve this, critique must be exercised; that is, the real root of any political development that stops at the appearances of citizenship, identity, or nation must be revealed.

This same task takes place in the critique of the universally dominant form of the scientific method. The critique of logical representation is based on showing that measurement avoids the question of the objective necessity of the subjectivity of the knower. And therefore, of the inability to recognize the necessity of one's own action.

The unity of these two tasks takes shape in critiques of political trends that, despite labeling themselves as revolutionary or critical, mutilate transformative action by reproducing the form of their alienated consciousness. For this reason, Conjunto Vacío opposes voluntarist or politicist positions in which the necessity of historical determination is denied. This critique is exercised with a radical character because the goal is to organize the action of the working class with a conscious awareness of its cause. The critique of Marxism arises from the need to address the fact that, by adopting a method foreign to the critique of political economy, it falls into dualisms and idealist inversions that undermine the potential of the working class's action. The prevailing voluntarism in Marxist organizations is compelled to salvage political action despite the process of knowledge, which leads them to activisms empty of content.

The critique to be made of activism lies in the prioritization of immediate action over the understanding of the objective determinants of that very action, replacing necessity with will. From the perspective of activism, action arises from pure

immediacy, and acting without regard to historical necessity turns your action into militant moralism. Thus, action that is not guided by full awareness of its necessity is powerless. It cripples all transformative potential of the knowledge produced. Historically, Marxism has conceived economic development and political action in an external relationship. Therefore, when a Marxist tries to link the consciousness of the commodity producer with the development of capitalist accumulation and finds that there is no revolutionary subject simply free from capital, he enters an insurmountable contradiction. In order not to fall into practical ineffectiveness, to save his political action from quietism, he must affirm his will as abstractly free as an act of faith.

Therefore, the task of criticizing organizations that do not develop radical doubt as a method must take shape in the production and objectification of objective knowledge directly linked to the working class's ability to transform its own existence. Thus, it is about enabling the working class to recognize itself as alienated and to become aware of its historical mission.

The way to carry this out, which always starts from the questioning of our "what is to be done?" is the analysis of the subjectivity of commodity producers. That is, of our subjectivity. This analysis includes the way individuals conceive of themselves, the forces that shape their existence, and the consequences of their participation in the social life process. For the worker, the analysis of their subjectivity is determined by being the analysis of the material qualities required by capital for the production of surplus value, which determines the value of their labor power. The constant revolution in the productive subjectivity of these individuals gives rise to a fragmentation. The analysis of the different forms this fragmentation takes in the course of the expanded reproduction of capital and its powers is the main task of Conjunto Vacío.

This main task includes the aforementioned critique of other organizations for their fetishistic approach, the analysis of the concrete forms that the movement of capital takes in the class struggle, and, at all times, the recognition of the necessity of these analyses in shaping our action both individually and collectively.

A. Conjunto Vacío

Therefore, the way in which collective activity should be developed is through the organized dialectical method. The method and structure of Conjunto Vacío cannot be anything other than the recognition of alienation as a condition of its own transformative power. This statement can be formulated with logical precision if it is considered that organization is not defined by the extensive aggregation of individuals, but by a criterion of membership whose internal determination is contradictory.

Let U be a domain of discourse and $P(x)$ be a predicate that defines a set by comprehension, that is

$$A = \{x \in U \mid P(x)\}.$$

The predicate $P(x)$ here represents the criterion of membership: not an empirical property, but a logical determination that expresses the relationship of the subject with itself and with the social totality.

Let's suppose that this criterion contains an intrinsic logical contradiction, which can be formalized as

$$\forall x \in U,\ P(x) \Rightarrow (Q(x) \wedge \neg Q(x)).$$

Since the proposition $Q(x) \wedge \neg Q(x)$ is logically false, the previous implication is equivalent to

$$\forall x (P(x) \rightarrow \bot),$$

this is,

$$\forall x \neg P(x).$$

Consequently, there is no $x \in U$ that satisfies the membership criterion, and the defined set turns out to be empty:

$$A = \{x \in U \mid P(x)\} = \varnothing.$$

This result does not express a lack of determination nor an empirical indeterminacy. On the contrary, the empty set appears here as the necessary effect of a saturated determination: the criterion of membership is fully determined, and it is precisely this determination that prevents any extensional realization. Contradiction is a constitutive moment of the criterion itself.

In these terms, the empty set can be characterized as the formal unity of a set and its negation. The predicate $P(x)$ simultaneously requires the inclusion and exclusion of every possible element in the domain U. This is an immediate exclusion derived from

the form of the criterion itself and not from a subsequent empirical exclusion.

Intensionality is understood here as the quality of the membership criterion, independent of the cardinality of the set it defines, which measures the degree of internal determination of the predicate that when intensionality reaches its maximum degree of contradiction, that is, when the relation of determination with itself becomes internally incompatible, all possibility of extensive deployment is blocked. Quantity cannot be expressed as a plurality of singular existences.

The result is a structure whose internal negativity preserves determination without allowing its realization as multiplicity. The whole is emptied not due to a lack of criteria, but because of an excess of contradictory determination. The empty set thus represents the limiting case in which the form of organization is affirmed precisely through the impossibility of its extensional expression, making internal contradiction itself a condition of its transformative power.